



FREEDOM WATCH



Aug. 13, 2002

Published in the interest of those serving in Operation Enduring Freedom

Bagram, Afghanistan

News briefs

(Compiled from
CNN.com)

Congo massacre toll reaches 90

KINSHASA, Congo — Women and children hacked to death with machetes are among the victims of renewed fighting in northeastern Congo. The 15 victims, found by a United Nations team on Sunday, bring the death toll from the fighting to at least 90. The U.N. observers found a pit in Bunia, less than 50 kilometres (30 miles) from the Ugandan border, where 38 hacked up bodies had been dumped on Friday. On Thursday 37 bodies were found.

Iran 'hands over al Qaeda members'

WASHINGTON — Suspected al Qaeda fighters on the run from Afghanistan and seeking refuge in neighboring Iran have been arrested and handed over to Saudi Arabia. The *Washington Post* reported that the Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, said in an interview that 16 al Qaeda members were expelled to Saudi Arabia by Iranian authorities.



Photo by Pfc. Matthew Acosta

Pulling security

Army Pfc. Giovanni Cominitto, M-203 gunner, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C., provides security for his company during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Deadline approaches for high school stabilization

Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Soldiers with high school juniors who graduate in 2004 should start talking to their assignment branch now if they wish to be stabilized at their present duty station for their child's graduation, said personnel officials.

More than 1,300 soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers have signed on to this program since its inception in April 2001.

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Army legal officer strives to 'make a difference'

By Staff Sgt. Zelda Thomas-Gates
300th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KABUL, Afghanistan — One morning, a young soldier was walking near alligator alley, an alley within the Coalition Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force compound. He came upon a lieutenant colonel surrounded by dozens of poor Afghan people.

Puzzled, the young soldier looked at the lieutenant colonel and asked, "Sir, what are you doing?"

The lieutenant colonel responded without looking up, "I'm trying to save the Afghans."

The young soldier chuckled aloud, and queried, "Sir, there are thousands of Afghans and only one of you. What difference can you make?"

Holding a new shipment of clothes and food in his hands, the lieutenant colonel turned to the young soldier and gently handed the supplies to the needy Afghan family and said, "It will make a difference to this family!"

That lieutenant colonel was Lt. Col. Marvin Benton, the CJCMOTF chief staff judge advocate.

That family isn't the

only one to feel the effects of Benton's kindness. Zarialay, an 8-year-old Afghan boy, began polishing shoes outside of the non-government organization compound in January. By spring, he had moved to the CJCMOTF compound and continued polishing shoes, averaging only several dollars a week to

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"My family has made great sacrifices for me and my military career," said Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Almendarez, medical operations sergeant in Camp Casey, Korea. "So, it is only fitting that the military and I should reward my son by allowing him to finish his senior year."

Almendarez was one of 1,380 soldiers who have applied for the stabilization program. So far 1,155 enlisted personnel have applied for stabilization. Of these, 1,153 were approved.

"Approximately 48 percent of the requests came from the sergeant-first-class rank," said Lt. Col. Patrick Sedlak, Enlisted Personnel Management Division at the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command. "We did, however, have command sergeants major through privates first class apply as well."

More than 225 officers have applied for the program as well. Of these, 220 were approved.

Soldiers must submit requests not later than 12 months prior to the beginning of the senior school year. For example, if the student's senior year starts in September 2003, the request must be submitted to PERSCOM not later than September 2002.

Soldiers may initiate a request for stabilization by submitting a DA Form 4187 listing the family member's name and social security number. The family member must be enrolled in the Defense Eligibility and Enrollment Reporting System, better known as DEERS. A letter from the high school stating when the family member is projected to graduate must be attached to the 4187.

Soldiers stationed overseas must state on the form that they will extend their foreign-service tour to meet the stabilization requirement.

Enlisted soldiers must also list any scheduled training, such as schooling or temporary duty enroute, on the 4187. Officers with scheduled training should contact their branch assignment officer to reschedule that training.

Stabilizing Army families with high school seniors to reduce turbulence was among the top recommendations of an Army Education Summit held in July 2000. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki heard the summit's out-brief and promised attendees to move forward quickly on the recommendations.

PERSCOM remains the approval authority for all stabilization requests.

(Editor's note: This article was released to ARNEWS by PERSCOM.)

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pay the rent and clothe and feed his grandmother, his elderly father and himself.

"One morning, I noticed that the boy was hurting. I asked him what was wrong. He told me that he was hungry. I went and got him something to eat. Every morning since, I've fed him," said Benton, a Reservist from Fort Worth, Texas. "After months of talking, Zarialay and I became friends."

Benton said he also noticed that Zarialay had worn the same clothes everyday, so he wrote home and had some friends send him clothing. Once the clothing arrived, he loaded a vehicle with Zarialay, his friend Weiss, two escorts and an interpreter.

Weiss is an 11-year-old boy who also shines shoes to help support his father, mother and four sisters.

Benton arrived at Weiss' place first. Since there weren't any roads to drive up to Weiss' house, he had to park the vehicle at the bottom of the village and walk about 10 minutes to the house.

The village has a medieval living style with clay huts and passageways. The air was filled with the smell of open-air latrines. The entrance to Weiss' place is about 5 feet high and 3 feet wide. The main dwelling is a 5-by-7 ft. room with foam mattresses and pillows against the wall for sleeping and sitting. The windows had no glass, just plastic and cardboard. The floors are covered with carpets and cloth remnants.

"I'm here to give these clothes to Weiss as a gift of kindness, friendship and to show that I care," Benton said once Weiss' father, Ghawsuadim, invited him and his group in to have a seat. Since the family didn't speak English, Benton's interpreter assisted with the conver-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Zelda Thomas-Gates

Lt. Col. Marvin Benton (right) stands with Zarialay, an 8-year-old shoeshine boy at the Coalition Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force compound, and his father and grandmother.

sation.

Ghawsuadim immediately covered his heart and said, "Thank you very much. Americans are very kind and thank you for bringing peace to our country."

Benton left the Weiss's place to go to Zarialay's place. As soon as he arrived, Zarialay jumped out from the vehicle, ran and opened the door to his place, where Benton was greeted by Zarialay's father Shrinkill and grandmother, Shrinkill.

He explained his visit and presented the family with a picture of the boys.

"I praise God for you!" Shrinkill said.

"I am not doing this for accolades or recognition, I just feel it's something I have to do," Benton said.

"I noticed a cemetery as I was leaving Weiss' place. As a Christian, it reminded me of how much work has to be done. I can't help everyone, but you'd be surprised how (a little) kindness impacts others."

Courtesy photo



Pinning the honors

Lt. Col. Mike Pandolfo, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, Pentagon, the most senior lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force, pinned Lt. Col. John "Buzz" Kraft, a pilot with the 89th Airlift Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Aug. 1 on the flight deck of a C-17 over Northern Afghanistan. The in-flight pin-on is a self-made tradition that Kraft has been participating in since 1984 when he was a first lieutenant.

If you have story ideas, call the 28th Public Affairs Detachment at 318 - 231- 4239

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER REPORT:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>
<u>Bagram:</u>	Dusty H: 95F L: 73F	Dusty H: 95F L: 72F
<u>Kandahar:</u>	Sunny H: 106F L: 73F	Dusty H: 108F L: 73F
<u>Kabul:</u>	Haze H: 95F L: 73F	Mostly clear H: 93F L: 73F
<u>Uzbekistan:</u>	Clear H: 106F L: 70F	Clear H: 105F L: 70F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

FREEDOM WATCH

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COALITION SPORTSZONE

Sports briefs

(Compiled by *ESPN.com*)

Bucs open with a bang

Jon Gruden has already brought something to the Tampa Bay Bucs they've never seen before — a kickoff return for a touchdown. Frank Murphy took the opening kickoff Monday night and sprinted 95 yards as fans at Raymond James Stadium celebrated coach Gruden's debut. The Bucs wound up 14-10 winners over Miami.

Major buildup

It wasn't a thing of beauty, but maybe he's just waiting for next week for that. Tiger Woods had no problem beating the field at the Buick Open on Sunday, but there were a few problems with the Warwick Hills Country Club course. Woods fired a 2-under-70 Sunday for a four-shot victory as he now officially sets his sights on the PGA.

Can Freedom go worst to first?

The WUSA will crown a new champion Aug. 24 after defending titleholder San Jose was eliminated during the final weekend of the regular season. The Washington Freedom look to be the team to beat as they're on a roll heading into the postseason, going 9-1-2 since star Mia Hamm returned to action after knee surgery. However, Carolina, this year's top team, as well as Philadelphia and 2001 runner-up Atlanta, are also in line to make a title run when the playoffs start this Saturday. Stormin' into the playoffs Lauren Jackson has taken the Storm into uncharted waters. Jackson matched her career-high of 27 points in Seattle's 74-57 win over the Starzz on Sunday to clinch its first postseason berth. Seven of eight playoff spots are spoken for, but Mechelle Voepel still expects the West to bring home another WNBA title. Nancy Lieberman, meanwhile, says the league MVP might come from the East.

The Weekend That Was

The dust has settled from a busy weekend of racing and Patrick Carpentier, winner of the Grand Prix of Mid-Ohio is the big winner, jumping to No. 2 on **RPM.ESPN.com**'s list of Who's Hot. Tony Stewart, winner of the Sirius Satellite Radio at The Glen, had the move of the week, according to the **RPM.ESPN.com** Weekend Wrap-up. And Felipe Giaffone finally broke through, earning his first career IRL win.

Pay day! Pat rakes record

Jockey Pat Day broke the career money earnings record on Saturday with a victory aboard With Anticipation in the \$500,000 Sword Dancer Handicap. With the \$300,000 in prize money, Day's horses have earned \$264,580,968 in his 29-year career. Chris McCarron, who retired last month, had the previous record of \$264,351,679. "Anticipaton" just edged out Denon at the wire.

Didn't miss a beat

Acelino Freitas hadn't fought since injuring his hand in January, but he didn't show any rust Saturday. The unbeaten Brazilian defended his WBA and WBO junior lightweight titles with a unanimous decision against Daniel Attah of Nigeria in Phoenix. Also on the card, Antwun Echols stopped Richard Grant to earn a shot at Sven Ottke's IBF super middleweight belt.

2002 Major League standings

American League East			GB
N.Y. Yankees	72-44	.621	-
Boston	68-48	.586	4
Baltimore	56-59	.487	15.5
American League Central			GB
Minnesota	70-49	.588	-
Chicago (AL)	57-62	.479	13
Cleveland	51-65	.440	17.5
American League West			GB
Seattle	72-46	.610	-
Anaheim	69-48	.590	2.5
Oakland	68-51	.571	4.5
National League East			GB
Atlanta	77-40	.658	-
N.Y. Mets	58-59	.496	19
Montreal	58-59	.496	19
National League Central			GB
St. Louis	63-52	.548	-
Cincinnati	61-55	.526	2.5
Houston	61-56	.521	3
National League West			GB
Arizona	73-45	.619	-
Los Angeles	66-52	.559	7
San Francisco	65-52	.556	7.5

Monday's scores

Anaheim 7-0 Detroit, top of 8th
 Toronto 2-1 Oakland
 St. Louis 10-6 Pittsburgh
 Colorado 1-0 Florida
 Houston 9-6 Chicago Cubs

Today's schedule

Houston at Chicago Cubs
 Los Angeles at Montreal
 Milwaukee at Philadelphia
 St. Louis at Pittsburgh
 Colorado at Florida
 Arizona at Cincinnati
 San Diego at N.Y. Mets
 Cleveland at Tampa Bay
 San Francisco at Atlanta
 N.Y. Yankees at Kansas City
 Baltimore at Minnesota
 Chicago Sox at Texas
 Detroit at Anaheim
 Toronto at Oakland
 Boston at Seattle